

THE TRANSPORTATION LINK

OFFICE OF
SMALL BUSINESS
UTILIZATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

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**Luz Araoz
Hopewell,
Director of the
Office of Small and
Disadvantaged
Business Utilization**

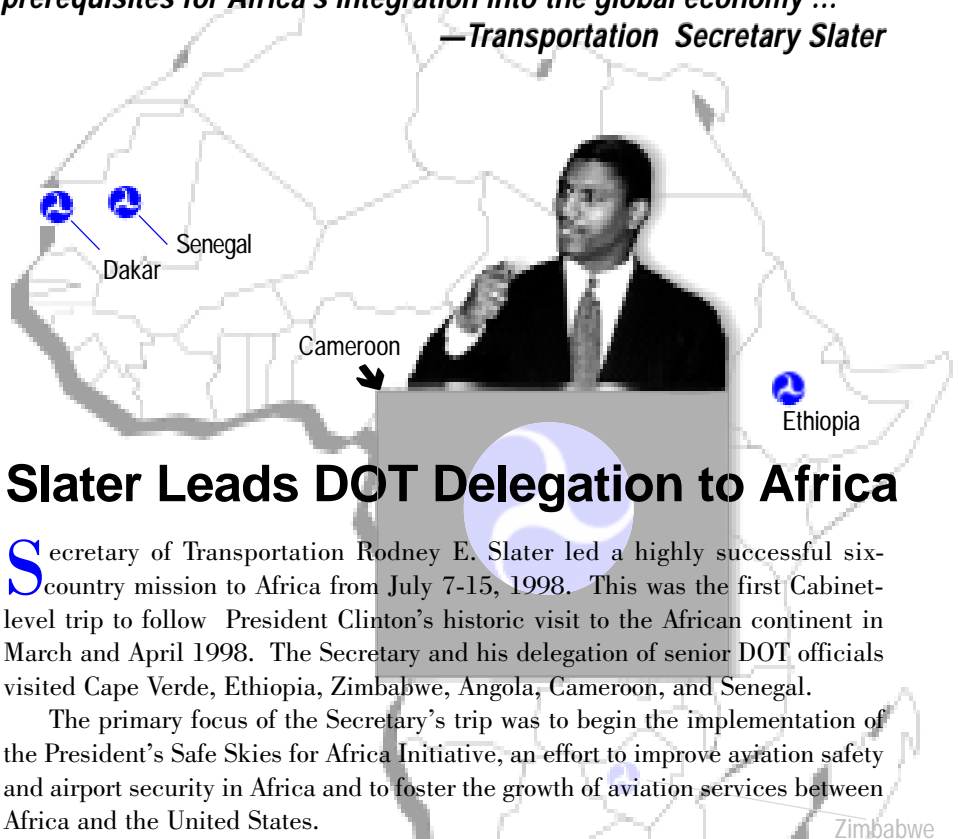
In this issue of *The Transportation Link*, we again focus on DOT's commitment to assist small businesses by increasing their awareness of international business opportunities (see *The Transportation Link* Oct. 1997). Earlier this year, Secretary Slater accompanied President Clinton on a historic 11-day mission to six countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Secretary Slater is committed to having the Department of Transportation lead the way in support of President Clinton's Africa initiative. This month, *The Transportation Link* highlights recent regional meetings the Secretary held in Dakar, Senegal, and Harare, Zimbabwe where international transportation issues were discussed.

Also in this month's newsletter, we've included important information for small businesses regarding two recent final rules issued by the SBA to strengthen the 8(a)-business development program. In fiscal year 1997, the 8(a) program accounted for \$6.4 billion in federal contracting.

In this month's *Success Story* we have turned the spotlight on Antoinette ("Toni") Ford, President and CEO of Telspan International, Inc. an exciting multimedia company working with emerging technologies in the Intelligent Transportation Systems industry.

"Safe air travel, secure airports and strong transportation links are prerequisites for Africa's integration into the global economy ..."
—Transportation Secretary Slater



Slater Leads DOT Delegation to Africa

Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater led a highly successful six-country mission to Africa from July 7-15, 1998. This was the first Cabinet-level trip to follow President Clinton's historic visit to the African continent in March and April 1998. The Secretary and his delegation of senior DOT officials visited Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Cameroon, and Senegal.

The primary focus of the Secretary's trip was to begin the implementation of the President's Safe Skies for Africa Initiative, an effort to improve aviation safety and airport security in Africa and to foster the growth of aviation services between Africa and the United States.

Secretary Slater convened two regional meetings of African Ministers of Transport in Harare, Zimbabwe, and Dakar, Senegal. Twenty-nine sub-Saharan African nations were represented at the two meetings, as were a wide range of international aviation organizations, donor institutions, and African regional organizations.

A major theme of the regional meetings was the importance of a sound aviation infrastructure to Africa's economic growth and development. "Safe air travel and secure airports are prerequisites for Africa's integration into the global economy — for increasing trade, attracting investment, developing a tourism industry and weaving together a modern society," said Secretary Slater.

The goals of the Safe Skies Initiative are to quadruple the number of African countries that meet International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards for aviation safety oversight within three years, to improve airport security at 8-12 airports in Africa over three years, and to improve regional air navigation services.

For the U.S. business community, safe and efficient air travel is key to opening the door to the growing commercial opportunities in Africa. "You can't trade if you can't get there," the Secretary noted.

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Business Utilization

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Secretary Slater

Contd. from 'Africa' on page 1

U.S. businesses in the transportation sector are becoming increasingly aware of the potential that the African continent holds. They see a continental market with vast untapped human and natural resources where the average return on investment exceeds 30%.

U.S. - Africa trade has been growing rapidly in recent years, with U.S. exports to the continent exceeding \$6 billion last year. The United States exports over 30% more to sub-Saharan Africa than to all the states of the former Soviet Union combined, and these exports support more than 100,000 American jobs. As trade with Africa continues to expand, so too will the opportunities for U.S. businesses, large and small.

While in Africa, Secretary Slater also emphasized the important cultural connections between the United States and Africa. "There are over 30 million Americans who trace their roots to Africa, and I am proud to be one," Slater said. The Secretary also noted that cultural ties provide African-Americans with a unique opportunity to expand business and commercial ties on the continent.

In the past year, Secretary Slater has made three trips to sub-Saharan Africa and visited ten countries in the region. Earlier this year, Secretary Slater accompanied President Clinton on his historic mission to Africa, and in July 1997, he co-led the U.S. Presidential delegation to the Fourth African-African American Summit in Harare, Zimbabwe.

For more information on Secretary Slater's visit to Africa, go to: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/africa/index.html>

SBA Final Rule Changes

To further expand economic opportunity for small disadvantaged businesses and comply with a Department of Justice procurement reform proposal, the Small Business Administration (SBA) has issued final rule changes. These changes will impact how small disadvantaged businesses participate in Federal contracting.

The first of these rules deals with the certification framework used by the SBA to determine the eligibility of small disadvantaged businesses (SDB's) to participate in federal government procurement programs. The government will no longer rely on self-certification for purposes of determining SDB eligibility. This rule also includes a process for those challenging the "disadvantaged" claim of a contract-seeking SDB.

The other final rule stipulates that

SDB's bidding on competitively awarded federal contracts may qualify for a 10% price evaluation credit. However, to be eligible for a credit, the SBA must certify the SDB's "disadvantaged" status in an industry pre-targeted by the Department of Commerce as being especially discriminatory. In addition, this final rule changes the name of the program from the Minority Small Business and Capital Ownership Development program to the 8(a) BD program and removes regulations deemed to be obsolete by the SBA.

For more information on these rules and other recent regulatory legislative activities, visit the OSDBU web site at: <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/legislat.htm> or call the DOT National Information Clearinghouse at (800) 532-1169.

INDUSTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR 10% PRICE EVALUATION ADJUSTMENT

MINING

Coal mining
Oil and gas extraction
Extraction of nonmetallic minerals, and Fuels

CONSTRUCTION

Building construction — general contractors
East North Central
East South Central
Middle Atlantic
West South Central

Heavy construction other than buildings—contractors
East South Central
West South Central

Construction — special trade contractors
New England
West North Central

MANUFACTURING

Textile mill products
Apparel and other finished products made from fabrics
Lumber and wood products,
Furniture and fixtures
Paper and allied products
Printing and publishing
Petroleum refining and related industries
Rubber and miscellaneous plastics products
Leather and leather products
Fabricated metal products
Electronic equipment, computers and components,
Transportation equipment
Measuring, analyzing, and controlling instruments;
photographic, medical and optical goods;
watches and clocks
Miscellaneous manufacturing industries

TRANSPORTATION and COMMUNICATIONS

Local and suburban transit and inter-urban highway
passenger transportation

Motor freight transportation and warehousing
Water transportation
Pipelines, natural gas
Transportation services
Communications
Electric, gas, and sanitary services

WHOLESALE TRADE

Wholesale Trade — durable goods
Wholesale Trade — non-durable goods

RETAIL TRADE

Building materials, hardware, garden supply,
and mobile home dealers
General Merchandise stores
Food stores
Automotive dealers and gasoline service stations
Apparel and accessory stores
Home furniture, furnishings, and equipment stores
Eating and drinking places
Miscellaneous retail

FINANCE, INSURANCE, AND REAL ESTATE

Insurance agents, brokers, and services
Depository institutions
Non-depository adjustment institutions
Security and commodity brokers, dealers
Insurance carriers
Insurance agents, brokers, and services
Real Estate
Holding and other investment offices

SERVICES

Hotels, rooming houses, camps, and other lodging
Business services
Automotive repair, services, and parking
Miscellaneous repair services
Health services
Educational services
Engineering, accounting, research, management,
and related services
Miscellaneous services

TELSPAN Engineers ITS Future



Antoinette ("Toni") Ford

led by its energetic founder and *ITS America* Board Member, Antoinette ("Toni") Ford, TELSPAN International, Inc. is a technology-applications company providing customized multimedia solutions for a variety of public and private sector clients.

Although this 8(a), Women and Minority

Owned business counts AT&T, CBS Records and Sprint as past or current clients, it's their work in the transportation field, specifically Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), that excites Ford most.

"ITS makes travel safer and generates revenue by saving time, money and lives," says Ford, who is serving her first term on the *ITS* Board. "I see the (*ITS* Board of Directors') primary mission to deliver information, support and advice as it relates to policy on intelligent transportation services."

One important *ITS* application TELSPAN engineers are perfecting is the Audio Visual Information Network (AVINs) that broadcasts news, sports, PSA announcements, and track interruption information for railroad travelers. A TELSPAN client —The Long Island (NY) Railroad (LIRR) — already deploys 90 outdoor AVIN™ display units at 8 different stations.

"Our customers feel (the display units) are a good way to get train infor-

mation," says LIRR Chief Information Officer, Joe DeCarlo. With display units becoming more multifunctional, DeCarlo sees a lucrative future for selling advertising on the units. "We can target an ad for a particular station," says DeCarlo.

Other TELSPAN *ITS* applications include: Video Ticketing Kiosks (VTK) that provide a two-way video link between passenger and ticket agent to allow live communication of information, reservations, and ticketing. The kiosk is on-line at all times to provide personal customer service without the need of a ticket agent at each location.

In addition, TELSPAN engineers have perfected a video monitor encasement (AVINGARD™) that is designed to withstand gale force winds, electromagnetic forces, vandalism and other environmental hazards.

TELSPAN also provides *ITS* products that allow transit systems to become ADA

(Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant by providing communications that meet the access requirements of disabled persons.

"By staying close to rapidly changing technologies, we are engineering products in commercial sectors that did not even exist when the company was started (in 1985)," says Ford, a onetime automobile plant manager.

In its first year of existence, TELSPAN generated \$1500 in corporate revenue. Today, TELSPAN's annual total revenue is well into the millions.

TELSPAN International sprouted from a one-question survey that asked a sampled audience to identify the emerging commercial opportunities for entrepreneurs in the next 10 years. "The



TELSPAN's outdoor public TV display system featuring the AVINGARD™ enclosure

answers came back," says Ford, "transportation, telecommunications, and health ... and I didn't know anything about health."

For the future, Ford sees TELSPAN entering the Assets Management arena for diversifying a business that she believes will one day have multiple profit centers. What is Toni Ford's simple prescription for success?

"To be successful—you must live in the future."

For more information about TELSPAN and its multi-media products, call Tom Albro at (301) 731-5355 or visit their new website. The address is:

www.telspanofmd.com



Editor's Note

Our editorial staff made several changes recently to the look and feel of *The Transportation Link*. These design upgrades were based on audience feedback and implemented to make reading and navigating the 'Link' easier. Our editorial mission will remain to publish information you need, when you need it.

As always, feel free to contact us with your questions, or critical feedback at: 1(800) 532-1169. The OSDBU is dedicated to improving quality and service to our valued customers.



With October 1 marking the start of fiscal year 1999, now is the time to familiarize yourself with the State and US DOT operating administration procurement sites assembled in one convenient location at OSDBU's web site, <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/programs/states.html>.

Contracting information available at these sites ranges from general contracting program descriptions to very specific details on contracting opportunities.

For example, the Texas DOT web-site has posted 101 construction projects worth nearly \$220 million dollars. The projects range from developing hiking and biking trails in the Travis District for \$1.4 million, to realigning curves and upgrades in the Burnet District for \$4.0 million, to landscaping in the Williamson District for \$130 thousand.

By providing both federal and state procurement information on our website the OSDBU office hopes to help you make your business a success.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR September/October 1998

DATE	EVENT	CONTACT
September 9-13	Midwestern Regional Summit on Africa Chicago, IL	J. Exum (708) 346-4198 or J. Harrington (312) 563-2048
September 15	TEA 21 Outreach Session Listening Session in New Orleans, LA	Leslie Wright (202) 366-9227 or W. Sussman (504) 389-0464
September 20-23	Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Washington, DC	1-877-MEDWEEK www.medweek98.org
September 25-26	US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 19th Annual National Convention Kansas City, MO	Juan Albert (202) 842-1212
September 28	One-DOT Conference: Planning and Environment Providence, RI	Leslie Wright (202) 366-9227
October 12-16	The 5th World Congress on ITS Seoul, Korea (Special Travel Rates Available)	http://www.itsa.org K.Stacy or B.Jessup kstacy@itsa.org bjessup@itsa.org fax: (202) 484-3483
October 28-29	Native American Trade Fair and Conference "Building Partnerships with Native Americans" Albuquerque, NM	Jane Spriggs (407) 306-6904
October 28-29	FAA 2nd East Coast Small Business Conference FAA Southern Regional Office College Park, GA	Michael O'Neil or Tom Needham at 1(800) 878-2940 ext.237 or ext. 245

<http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>

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